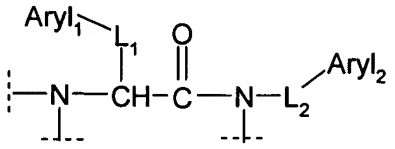
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Amended) A compound comprising at least one moiety of the formula

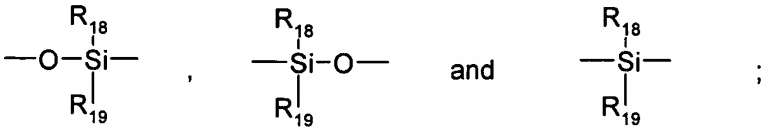


wherein L_1 and L_2 are each a hydrocarbon group of from 1 to 6 carbons or a direct bond, and $Aryl_1$ and $Aryl_2$ are aryl, wherein each of $Aryl_1$ and $Aryl_2$ are substituted by at least one lipophilic group, wherein $Aryl_2$ is substituted with at least one lipophilic group selected from the group consisting of:

$-Y-C_1-C_6$ alkyl-NR_7R_8

wherein

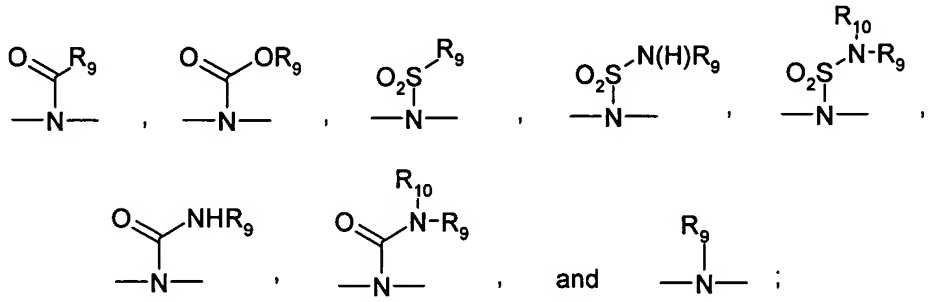
Y is selected from the group consisting of $-CH_2-$, -O-, -N(H), -S-, SO_2-, -CON(H)-, -NHC(O)-, -NHCON(H)-, $-NHSO_2-$, $-SO_2N(H)-$, -C(O)-O-, $-NHSO_2NH-$, -O-CO-,



wherein R_{18} and R_{19} are independently selected from the group consisting of aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkylaryl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, and C_1-C_6 alkoxyaryl; and

R_7 and R_8 are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkylaryl; and wherein

R_7 and R_8 may be taken together to form a ring having the formula $-(CH_2)_m-X-(CH_2)_n-$ bonded to the nitrogen atom to which R_7 and R_8 are attached, wherein m and n are, independently, 1, 2, 3, or 4; X is selected from the group consisting of $-CH_2-$, -O-, -S-, $-S(O_2)-$, -C(O)-, -CON(H)-, -NHC(O)-, -NHCON(H)-, $-NHSO_2-$, $-SO_2N(H)-$, -C(O)-O-, -O-C(O)-, $-NHSO_2NH-$,



wherein R_9 and R_{10} are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkylaryl;

and wherein the compound has a molecular weight of less than 1000.

2. (Amended) The compound of Claim 1, wherein at least one of $Aryl_1$ and $Aryl_2$ is substituted with a ~~the~~ lipophilic group ~~is~~ selected from the group consisting of C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkylaryl, ~~or~~ and C_1-C_6 alkoxyaryl.

Claims 3-10 (Canceled).

11. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of claim 1 together with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers or diluents.

12. (Original) The pharmaceutical composition of to claim 11, in the form of an oral dosage or parenteral dosage unit.

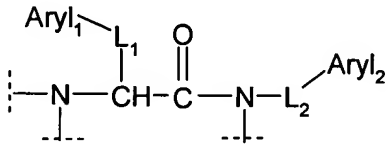
13. (Original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein said compound is administered as a dose in a range from about 0.01 to 500 mg/kg of body weight per day.

14. (Original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein said compound is administered as a dose in a range from about 0.1 to 200 mg/kg of body weight per day.

15. (Original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 11, wherein said compound is administered as a dose in a range from about 0.1 to 100 mg/kg of body weight per day.

Claims 16-28 (Canceled).

29. (Original) A method for the inhibition of the interaction of RAGE with its physiological ligands, which comprises administering to a subject in need thereof, at least one compound comprising at least one moiety of the formula

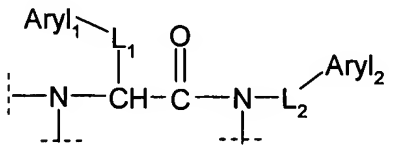


wherein L_1 and L_2 are each a hydrocarbon group of from 1 to 6 carbons or a direct bond, and $Aryl_1$ and $Aryl_2$ are aryl, wherein each of $Aryl_1$ and $Aryl_2$ are substituted by at least one lipophilic group.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein the ligand(s) is(are) selected from advanced glycated end products (AGEs), S100/calgranulin/EN-RAGE, β-amyloid and amphoterin.

31. (Canceled).

32. (Original) A method for treating a disease state selected from the group consisting of acute and chronic inflammation, vascular permeability, nephropathy, atherosclerosis, retinopathy, Alzheimer's disease, erectile dysfunction, and tumor invasion and/or metastasis, which comprises administering to a subject in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of at least one compound comprising at least one moiety of the formula

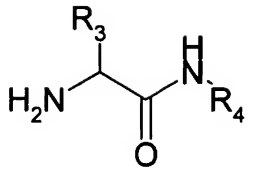


wherein L_1 and L_2 are each a hydrocarbon group of from 1 to 6 carbons, or a direct bond, and $Aryl_1$ and $Aryl_2$ are aryl, wherein each of $Aryl_1$ and $Aryl_2$ are substituted by at least one lipophilic group.

33. (Original) The method of claim 32, further comprising administering to a subject in need thereof at least one adjuvant and/or additional therapeutic agent(s).

Claims 34-43 (Canceled).

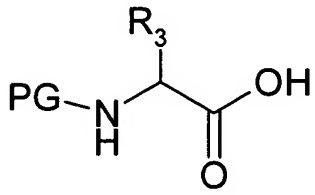
44. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of the Formula (II)



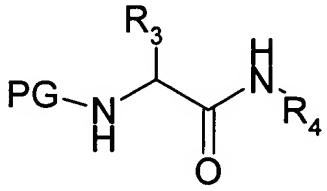
(II)

which comprises the steps:

(a) reacting a compound of the formula



with an amine of the formula R_4-NH_2, in the presence of a coupling reagent to form a compound of the formula



followed by removal of the protecting group PG,

wherein R_3 is selected from

a) -C_{1-6} alkyl;

b) –aryl; and

c) -C_{1-6} alkylaryl;

R_4 is selected from

a) -C_{1-6} alkylaryl;

b) -C_{1-6} alkoxyaryl; and

c) –aryl;

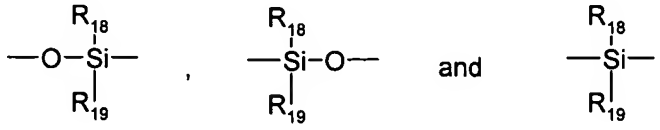
and wherein

the aryl and/or alkyl group(s) in R_3 and R_4 may be optionally substituted 1-4 times with a substituent group, wherein said substituent group(s) or the term substituted refers to groups selected from the group consisting of:

a) -H;

b) -Y- C_{1-6} alkyl;
-Y-aryl;
-Y-C_{1-6} alkylaryl;
-Y-C_{1-6}-alkyl-NR_7R_8; and
-Y-C_{1-6}-alkyl-W-R_{20};

wherein Y and W are, independently selected from the group consisting of -CH_2-, -O-, -N(H), -S-, SO_2-, -CON(H)-, -NHC(O)-, -NHCON(H)-, -$NHSO_2$-, -$SO_2N(H)$-, -C(O)-O-, -$NHSO_2NH$-, -O-CO-,



;

and

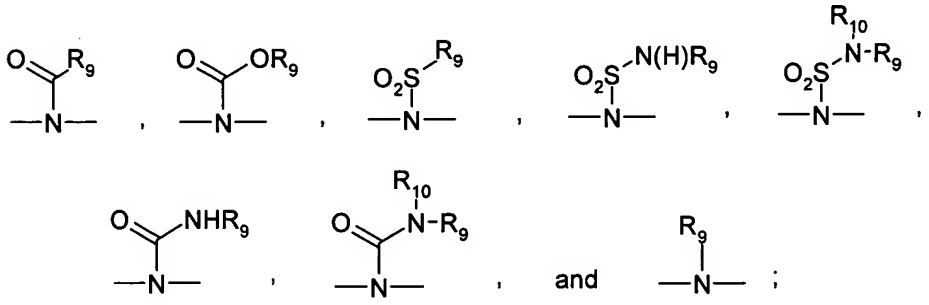
c) halogen, hydroxyl, cyano, carbamoyl, or carboxyl; and

R_{18} and R_{19} are selected from the group consisting of aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkylaryl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, and C_1-C_6 alkoxyaryl;

R_{20} is selected from the group consisting of aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkylaryl;

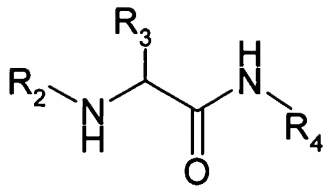
R_7 and R_8 are selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkylaryl; and wherein

R_7 and R_8 may be taken together to form a ring having the formula $-(CH_2)_m$-X-$(CH_2)_n$- bonded to the nitrogen atom to which R_7 and R_8 are attached, wherein m and n are, independently, 1, 2, 3, or 4; X is $-CH_2$-, -O-, -S-, -$S(O_2)$-, -C(O)-, -CON(H)-, -NHC(O)-, -NHCON(H)-, -$NHSO_2$-, -$SO_2N(H)$-, -C(O)-O-, -O-C(O)-, -$NHSO_2NH$-,



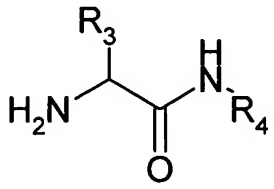
and PG is an amino protecting group.

45. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of Formula (III)



(III)

which comprises reacting a compound of Formula (II)



(II)

(A) with an aldehyde or ketone of the formula $R_{12}C(O)R_{11}$ in the presence of a reducing agent, wherein R_{12} and R_{11} are independently selected from

a) –H;

b) -C_{1-6} alkyl;

c) –aryl;

d) -C_{1-6} alkylaryl;

e) -C(O)-O-C_{1-6} alkyl;

f) -C(O)-O-C_{1-6} alkylaryl;

g) -C(O)-NH-C_{1-6} alkyl;

h) -C(O)-NH-C_{1-6} alkylaryl;

i) -SO_2-C_{1-6} alkyl;

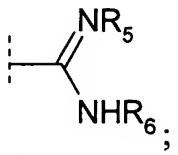
j) -SO_2-C_{1-6} alkylaryl;

k) -SO_2-aryl;

l) -SO_2-NH-C_{1-6} alkyl;

m) $-SO_2-NH-C_{1-6}$ alkylaryl;

n)



;

o) $-C(O)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl; and

p) $-C(O)-C_{1-6}$ alkylaryl;

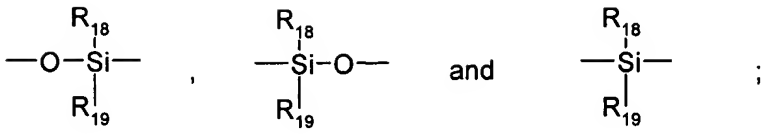
and wherein

the aryl and/or alkyl group(s) in R_1 and R_2 may be optionally substituted 1-4 times with a substituent group, wherein said substituent group(s) or the term substituted refers to groups selected from the group consisting of:

a) -H;

b) $-Y-C_{1-6}$ alkyl;
-Y-aryl;
$-Y-C-_{1-6}$ alkylaryl;
$-Y-C_{1-6}$-alkyl-NR_7R_8; and
$-Y-C_{1-6}$-alkyl-W-R_{20};

wherein Y and W are, independently selected from the group consisting of $-CH_2-$, -O-, -N(H), -S-, SO_2-, -CON(H)-, -NHC(O)-, -NHCON(H)-, $-NHSO_2-$, $-SO_2N(H)-$, -C(O)-O-, $-NHSO_2NH-$, -O-CO-,



and

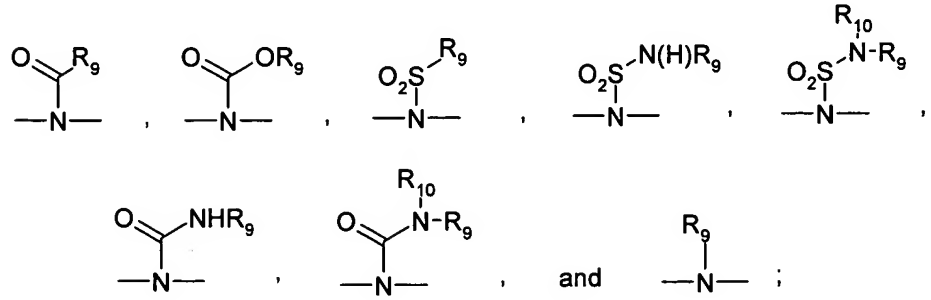
c) halogen, hydroxyl, cyano, carbamoyl, or carboxyl; and

R_7 and R_8 are selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkylaryl;

R_{18} and R_{19} are selected from the group consisting of aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkylaryl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, and C_1-C_6 alkoxyaryl;

R_{20} is selected from the group consisting of aryl, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkylaryl; and wherein

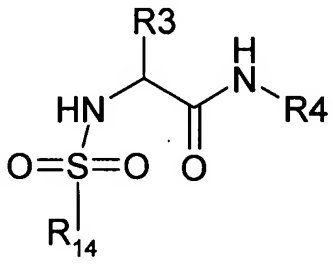
R_7 and R_8 may be taken together to form a ring having the formula $-(CH_2)_m-X-(CH_2)_n-$ bonded to the nitrogen atom to which R_7 and R_8 are attached, and/or R_5 and R_6 may, independently, be taken together to form a ring having the formula $-(CH_2)_m-X-(CH_2)_n-$ bonded to the nitrogen atoms to which R_5 and R_6 are attached, wherein m and n are, independently, 1, 2, 3, or 4; X is $-CH_2-$, -O-, -S-, $-S(O_2)-$, -C(O)-, -CON(H)-, -NHC(O)-, -NHCON(H)-, $-NHSO_2-$, $-SO_2N(H)-$, -C(O)-O-, -O-C(O)-, $-NHSO_2NH-$,



or

(B) with a tertiary amine base and an alkylating agent of the formula R_2-Z, wherein Z is a nucleofugal group, and R_2 is as defined above for R_{12} or R_{11}.

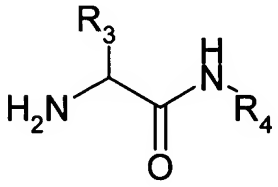
46. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of Formula (IV)



(IV)

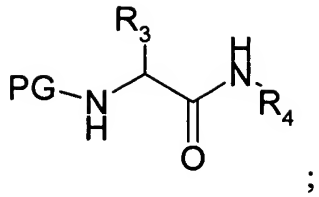
which comprises either

(a) treating a compound of the formula



with a compound of the formula $R_{14}SO_2Cl$, wherein R_{14} is C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-6} alkylaryl, or aryl, or

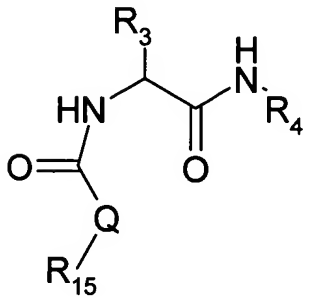
(b) treating an amine compound of the formula R_{15}-NH_2 with sulfuryl chloride, to afford an intermediate which is then contacted with a compound of the formula



;

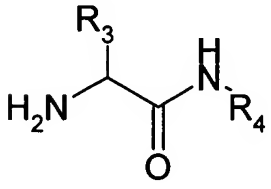
wherein R_3, R_4, and PG are as defined in claim 44.

47. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of Formula (V)



(V)

which comprises contacting a compound of Formula (II)

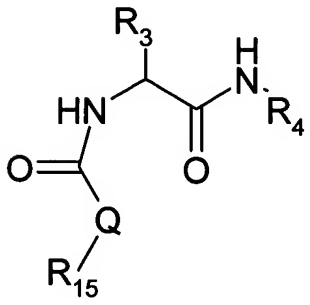


(II)

wherein R_3 and R_4 are as defined in claim 44,

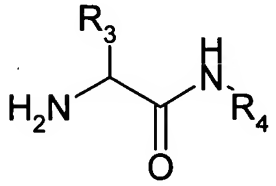
with a compound of the formula $R_{15}NCO$, optionally in the presence of a tertiary amine, wherein R_{15} is $-C_{1-6}$ alkyl or $-C_{1-6}$ alkylaryl and Q is –NH-.

48. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of Formula (V)



(V)

which comprises contacting a compound of Formula (II)

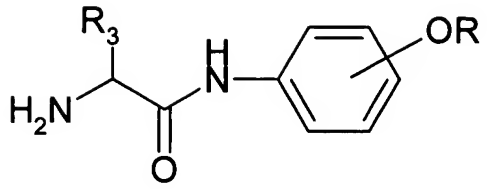


(II)

as defined in claim 47,

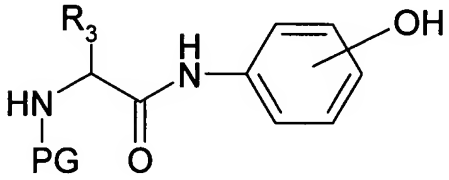
with a compound of the formula $R_{15}O$-C(O)Cl and a tertiary amine base, wherein R_{14} is $-C_{1-6}$ alkyl or $-C_{1-6}$ alkylaryl and Q is –O-.

49. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of Formula (VI)



(VI)

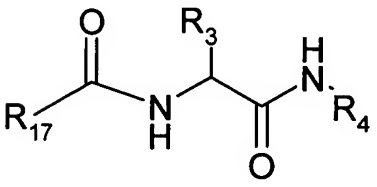
which comprises contacting a compound of the formula



with triphenylphosphine and either (a) diisopropyl azodicarboxylate or diethy azodicarboxylate and an alcohol of the formula $R_{16}OH$, followed by treatment with a strong base or strong acid, depending upon the identity of PG;

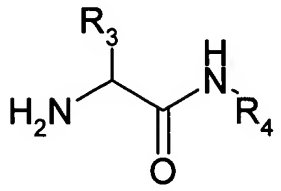
wherein PG is a urethane-type blocking group; and
R_{16} is C_{1-6} alkyl, -C_{1-6} alkylaryl, -C_{1-6} alkyl-Si(C_{1-6} alkyl)$_3$, -C_{1-6} alkyl-OSi(C_{1-6} alkylaryl)$_3$, or –C_{1-6} alkyl-NR_7R_8, provided that neither of R_7 and R_8 are hydrogen.

50. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of Formula (VII)



(VII)

which comprises contacting a compound of the formula



with either

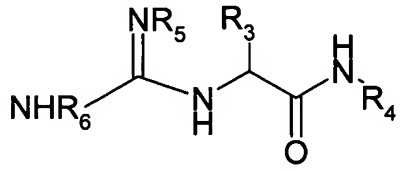
(a) a compound of the formula $(R_{17}\text{-}CO)_2O$, in the presence of a tertiary amine;

(b) a compound of the formula $R_{17}\text{-}C(O)Cl$, in the presence of a tertiary amine; or

(c) a compound of the formula $R_{17}\text{-}C(O)OH$ and a coupling reagent.

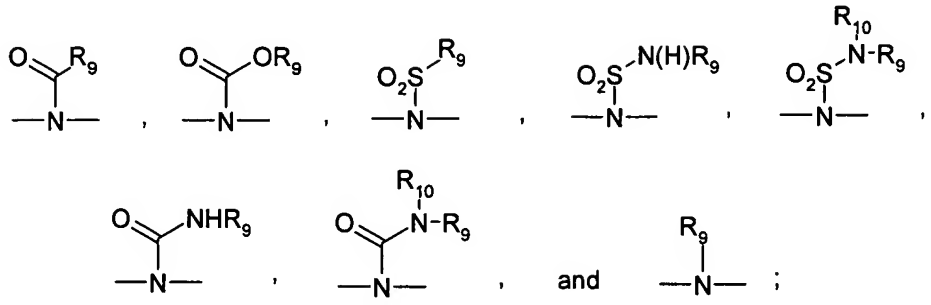
wherein R_{17} is $C_{1\text{-}6}$ alkyl or $C_{1\text{-}6}$ alkylaryl; and R_3 and R_4 are as defined in claim 44.

51. (Original) A process for preparing a compound of Formula (VIII)

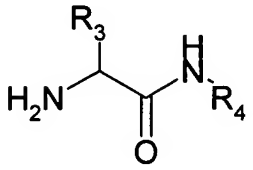


wherein R_3 and R_4 are as defined in claim 43, and R_5 and R_6 are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, $C_1\text{-}C_6$ alkyl, $C_1\text{-}C_6$ alkylaryl, and aryl; and/or R_5 and R_6 may, independently, be taken together to form a ring having the formula $\text{-}(CH_2)_m\text{-}X\text{-}(CH_2)_n\text{-}$ bonded to the nitrogen atoms to which R_5 and R_6 are attached, wherein m and n are, independently, 1, 2, 3, or 4; X is selected from the group consisting of $\text{–}CH_2\text{-}$, -O-, -S-, -

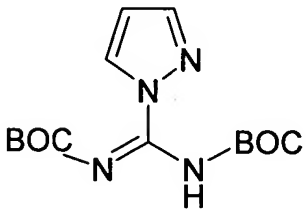
$S(O_2)$-, -C(O)-, -CON(H)-, -NHC(O)-, -NHCON(H)-, $-NHSO_2$-, $-SO_2N(H)$-, -C(O)-O-, -O-C(O)-, $-NHSO_2NH$-,



which comprises contacting a compound of the formula



with an activated amidine reagent of the formula



in the presence of a tertiary amine, followed by treatment with a strong acid, wherein BOC represents tert-butoxycarbonyl-.